

„micro-drames“: Jérôme Leuba - Sebastian Stumpf

8.12.2017 – 27.1.2018
(from 22.12.2017-6.1.2018 by appointment)

annex14 is delighted to be showing the double-exhibition "micro-drames" featuring works by two artists represented by the gallery who use performative techniques in different ways.

Man plays a key role as a narrative feature in the works of both Jerome Leuba (*1970, CH) and Sebastian Stumpf (*1980, D). In the case of Leuba, man can be visibly present in the image or indirectly through the requisites left over from an action that was apparently or actually staged by the artist. In the case of Stumpf, it is always the artist himself who is present in the image. It is he who stands in front of the camera during his actions as a one-man performer and who registers the performances.

In Sebastian Stumpf's serial works, for example, the photo series *Fences* (2017) on show here and the video projections *River* (2017) and *Ocean* (2016), his presence in the image is a consistent feature. In the landscape, at the canal, at the sea front or in the confusion of the city and its suburban transit zones, the human body becomes a fragile constant. At the same time, the solitary figures in the urban or rural surroundings also recall the solitary figures of the German Romantic artist Caspar David Friedrich, whose work mirrored the radical political, social and societal turmoil of his time. Borderline experience and critical reflection are also themes in the works of Sebastian Stumpf. The motif of the fence, for example, which can be understood as a multifaceted allusion to populist trends in current national isolation and exclusion policies. The quasi defiant presence of man, respectively the artist, in the image also points to the fine balance in the dialogue between the I and the world, because that I seems to be simultaneously threatened by disappearance, despite being captured in the image.

"Le trou dans l'image" (the hole in the image) is what Jérôme Leuba calls those details in the image that can guide our gaze, as if by chance, to something concealed, censored and repressed. For the artist, these "holes in the image" uncover a wide field of conjecture and speculation to be seen by the attentive observer through what is shown. They also reveal information that under certain circumstances runs counter to the actual intention and the planned impact of a picture. The artist also includes a criticism of the information media, whose handling of images is often aimed more at emotions than at enlightenment. The scenario in *Hidden Bodies*, 2017, for example, plays skilfully with our collective visual memory. It sets out different tracks ./.

for possible readings and thus remains deliberately ambiguous. So in Leuba's case the observers are involved in an active reading of visual facts that is expressed in a stimulating mode of thinking in variants.

Elisabeth Gerber